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FINAL MINUTES

*Meeting of the Civil Dialogue Group Animal Products – Sheep and Goat meat -
Beekeeping*

Date: 13/11/2018

Chair: Mr. Angus Woods

Organisations present: All Organisations were present, except BEUC, EFA, EFFAT, EFNCP, EPHA, EMB, ERPA, IFAH EUROPE, IFOAM.

Approval of the agenda (and of the minutes of previous meeting¹)

The agenda of the day and the minutes of the previous meeting are adopted without any comment.

Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public.

List of points discussed

- **Sheep and Goat: morning session**

- 1. Approval of the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting*
- 2. Market situation and short-term prospects for sheep and goats — Presentation by the European Commission and discussion*
- 3. Information from the EC on the CAP, with a particular focus on the provisions relevant for the sheep sector and exchange of views*
- 4. Evaluation roadmap on origin labelling for meat – information from the European Commission and exchange of views*
- 5. EU Promotion programmes – state of play for sheep meat*
- 6. Information on the delegated act regarding identification and registration of animals (in the framework of the Animal Health Law.*
- 7. AOB*

¹ If not adopted by written procedure (CIRCABC)

2. Market situation and short-term prospects for sheep and goat meat

The **Commission** presents an update on the sheep and goat meat market, highlighting the modest decrease of numbers of sheep in the recent years. In terms of trade, the Commission reports a high increase due mainly to Australian sheep imports (50% of the quota used) and a slight decrease of exports. The current outlook shows an overall stability for 2019. Furthermore the Commission considered the importance of the UK as consumer destination for EU sheep meat and supplier of live animals to Ireland.

CELCAA thanks the Commission for the update and asks for more data on consumption.

COPA-COGECA asks the Commission whether any consequence of the drought has been observed on the slaughtering. Moreover, it stresses the necessity not to open further quota with third countries for imports.

EBB asks the Commission whether it would be possible to have more data on trade destination of live animals.

The **Commission** informs the participants that data on forecasted consumption figures from experts of working group will be presented at the following meeting; specific graph on live animal trade will probably be presented as well. Regarding drought, the Commission is unable to assess the consequences as they only have information until august.

3. Information from the EC on the CAP, with a particular focus on the provisions relevant for the sheep sector and exchange of views

The **Commission** gives a presentation on the main modifications proposed for the future Common Agricultural Policy with a focus on the sheep and goat meat sectors.

EBB asks whether indicators will be further defined and if they will include aspects related to animal health, digitalisation and agroecology.

ECVC declares its support to the capping. However, it claims excessive the accent put on digitalisation and criticises the calculation based on surfaces and numbers of animals.

COPA-COGECA urges the Commission to reflect thoroughly on the indicators and claims that further reflection is needed on how conditionality works.

4. Evaluation roadmap on origin labelling for meat – information from the European Commission and exchange of views

The Commission presents the state of play on the evaluation of Regulation 1137/2013 regarding the mandatory indication of country of origin or place of provenance of fresh, chilled and frozen meat of swine, sheep, goats and poultry: the Services are finalising preparing the terms of reference for the an external evaluator study, while the evaluation roadmap ishas already been published; by April 2020 a report will be submitted by the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. At the following CDG a further update will be given to the participants.

CELCAA asks the Commission whether PGIs were encompassed in the evaluation.

The **Commission** replies negatively.

5. EU promotion programmes – state of play for sheep meat

The **Commission** presents the outcome of 2018 calls with emphasis on the sheep and goat meat sector and the 2019 Annual Work Programme (AWP) that was to be adopted the following day (on 14/11).

CELCAA claims that specific funds should be foreseen and asks the Commission if the AWP for 2019 foresees ring-fencing.

EBB asks whether specific sustainability criteria exists for the sheep sector, compared to the beef sector.

The **Commission** reminds the participants that a dedicated budget of 2 million € for simple programmes and 4 million €, both for internal market, has been allocated for sustainable sheep/goat meat the AWP for 2018. However, no specific envelope is foreseen for the sector for 2019, it does not mean that the sector could not fully benefit from the promotion policy : in 2017 there have been no ring-fenced budget however several programme proposals for promoting sheep/goat meat have been selected. On the sustainability criteria, the Commission reminds that the definition is included in the AWP..

6. Information on the delegated act regarding identification and registration of animals in the framework of the Animal Health law

The **Commission** presents the main elements of the delegated act that will be applied as from 21st April 2021, and particularly: the traceability requirements, the basic values and means for identification, the relevant exemptions, the documents for movement, the telematics procedures, the configuration of animal ID.

ECVC hopes that the electronic traceability will not become obligatory and is happy to consider tattoos as a possible alternative for the identification.

COPA-COGECA reminds that additional tagging of animals add an economic burden on the producer. Nonetheless, it declares supportive of the electronic tagging.

Additional point – Brexit, with a specific focus on TRQs

The **Commission** gives a update on the Brexit negotiations.

COPA-COGECA insists on the need to solve the border issue between Ireland and UK, as it constitutes a major problem for the sector.

CELCAA asks the Commission when the CDG on Brexit will take place.

The **Commission** replies that no date has been proposed so far.

• Beekeeping: afternoon session

- 1. Situation and management of the honey market*
- 2. State of play of finalized research project related to honey and bees.*
- 3. Information on low-quality beeswax and the impact on the beekeeping sector and measures taken by the Commission*
- 4. State of play Phytosanitary products*
 - Information on the legislation regarding neonicotinoids.*
 - The Bee Guidance Document*
- 5. Information on the EU-rules on labelling of honey*
- 6. State of play regarding Vespa velutina*
- 7. Information on the EU-rules regarding antibiotics in honey (to be confirmed)*
- 8. AOB*

The Chair asked the attendees if they approved the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes were then approved.

1. Situation and management of the honey market

The Commission gave an overview of the EU market situation. It was however highlighted that some of the information received from Member States is only renewed every three years, therefore some numbers are from 2016. The EU is still the second world producer (250,000 tonnes) after China. The total number of beehives in the EU is 17 million. There are 600,000 beekeepers at EU level but this number is decreasing. China remains the main supplier for imported honey (around 40% of EU imports). Spain is the EU country with the biggest number of hives (17%), followed by Romania (10%). As regards the number of hives per beekeeper, it varies from 119 in Spain to 6 in UK. The average is 28 hives per beekeeper at EU level. The average EU import price is decreasing since 2014 and the average export price is in a decreasing trend since last year. This presentation is available on DG AGRI's website.

Copa thanked the Commission for the presentation and said that the market situation is more and more worrying because of the very cheap prices for the imports from China :1,30 euros/kg. The export prices for EU products is also decreasing. The prices paid to beekeepers do not cover the costs of production in particular in Hungary and Spain. In addition to the problems of adulteration of imported honey, climate change is also having more and more a negative impact on honey production.

2. State of play of finalized research project related to honey and bees.

A representative from the Commission presented several projects funded by the European Commission on bees. He started by presenting several completed FP7 projects such as BEEDOC (Bees in Europe and the decline of honeybee colonies), CLEANHIVE (detecting the pathogens that threatens European bees), PyNaMite (mode of actions and selectivity of pyrethroids on economically important mites and ticks), Swarmonitor EU project, SmartBees (Sustainable management of resilient bee populations). There are at least 20 projects addressing wholly or partially bees or pollinators and their cumulative EU contribution is 39 million euros.

Then he presented several on-going H2020 projects and the PoshBee project (pan-European assessment, monitoring, and mitigation of stressors on the health of bees). His presentation is available on the website of DG AGRI.

Copa thanked the representative of the Commission for his presentation and regretted that this was not done more often. Indeed, the sector is not informed about the results of all these projects. However the sector needs applied research to tackle all the challenges it is facing. This kind of information should be more accessible to the sector. In addition, we would have also liked to have a presentation on the projects concerning honey and beehive products.

CEJA asked the way a young beekeeper can submit project at regional level on the way to improve honey production or reduce production costs.

The representative from the Commission replied that with Horizon 2020 more actors were introduced in the projects to ensure that the results would be closer to the needs of the sector. Most of the projects are available on the website of CORDIS but not all. He also explains the different ways to submit a research project.

3. Information on low-quality beeswax and the impact on the beekeeping sector and measures taken by the Commission

A representative from the Commission gave a presentation on the state-of-play of the adulteration of beeswax with stearin and paraffin case. For now, the Commission has focused on collecting data, raising awareness and is currently discussing with EFSA the terms of reference of the technical and scientific assistance concerning the establishment

of quality criteria and specifications for beeswax intended for apiculture use, the evaluation of the migration of stearin and paraffin and the possible concerns for human and bee health. The result is expected during 2019.

Depending on the outcome, as proposed by certain MS, some legal amendments of the Animal-By-Product Commission Implementing Regulation¹ could be considered after intensive discussion with stakeholders.

Copa thanked the Commission for the work that has been done so far. As regards the definition for wax, there should be only one EU-wide definition. Then, the Commission should help the sector to deal with the wax that is impure.

The representative from the Commission replied that the priority for the Commission is now to deter the fraud, and to have the scientific work done by EFSA as soon as possible.

Beelife informed the Commission about the fraud cases that happened in France.

4. State of play Phytosanitary products

- Information on the legislation regarding neonicotinoids.

The representative from the Commission reminded the attendees that the use of pesticides containing 3 neonicotinoids (clothianidin, imidacloprid, thiamethoxam) is restricted to indoor uses. Then the Commission explained the current process regarding the French notification of national measures regarding neonicotinoids. The presentation is available on DG AGRI's website.

- The Bee Guidance Document

The representative from the Commission explained to the attendees that EFSA published in 2013 the Guidance on the risk assessment of plant protection products on bees. For this guidance, the Commission proposes a stepwise implementation: acute and chronic risk to honeybees first. The discussion with MS that was previously blocked restarted in May 2018. Only 9 Member States supported the current implementation plan during the Standing Committee on October 2018. At that meeting, the Commission invited Member States to provide comments on the proposal to delay the implementation date of the chronic risk assessment to honeybees. This presentation is available on the DG AGRI's website.

Copa said that the adoption of the Bee guidance document is taking too much time.

EEB said that in France there are currently many demonstrations against plant protection products and the on-going situation is not good.

Beelife is concerned with the current situation on neonicotinoids.

The representative from the Commission said that regarding the derogation asked by the a few Member States, the Commission will look into it to make sure that all the requirements were complied with.

5. Information on the EU-rules on labelling of honey

The Commission gave a presentation on the rules on labelling of honey from Directive 2001/110 relating to honey (Honey-Directive) and from Regulation 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers (FIC-Regulation). The presentation is available on the website of DG AGRI.

Copa said that the sector with the support of the European Parliament wishes to have the rules changed in order to have a compulsory labelling of origin with indication of the country.

Cogeca asked why the Commission is not planning to change these rules on labelling.

The Commission representative replied that they do not see that consumers are not enough informed.

Beelife said that in France they tried to have these rules changed.

6. State of play regarding Vespa velutina

A representative from the Commission made a presentation on this matter. Vespa Velutina was listed as invasive alien species of Union concern under Regulation 1143/2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species (IAS). It is a predator of honeybees, wasps and other important pollinators. It can rapidly decimate entire beehives and there is a strong risk for rapid spread, causing significant economic and ecological damage. Actions at EU level action seek to prevent this spread by inter alia rapidly destroying its nests. If widely spread, appropriate management measures have to be taken. When listing the species in 2016, it was established in France, Spain and Portugal, with casual observations in Belgium, Germany and Italy. Meanwhile, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK are attempting to prevent its establishment through early detection and rapid eradication measures. For further information, the presentation is available on the website of DG AGRI.

Copa said that from experience, once there is a nest, it is no longer possible to eradicate it. Its growth is about 100 km per year. There is a need for a stronger centralised action, because without better coordination between member states, the EU strategy will not be effective.

7. Information on the EU-rules regarding antibiotics in honey (to be confirmed)

This item was not presented.

8. AOB

There was no AOB added.

Disclaimer

"The opinions expressed in this report represent the point of view of the meeting participants from agriculturally related NGOs at community level. These opinions cannot, under any circumstances, be attributed to the European Commission. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on behalf of the Commission is responsible for the use which might be made of the here above information."

List of participants

Civil Dialogue Group Animal Products: Sheep and GoatMeat – Beekeeping

Date: 13/11/2018

Bee Life	Adolphe	Cindy
BirdLife Europe	Dobrescu	Constantin
CEJA	SANCHEZ QUIROS	MARIA REMEDIOS
CELCAA	Dracup	John
CELCAA	GEORGOUDIS	GEORGIOS LEONIDAS
CELCAA	Ryan	Joe
CELCAA	Rodriguez	Gemma
CELCAA	Neghirla	Ioana
CELCAA	Martinez	Pascual
COGECA	KUKOVICS	Sandor
COGECA	ÖSTLUND	Viktoria
COGECA	ŠVÉDA	JAN
COGECA	MULC	Danijel
COGECA	PRODROMIDOU	EIRINI
COGECA	CALDERÓN	Marco Antonio
COGECA	diaz romero	angel
COGECA	Koltowski	Zbigniew
COGECA (notetaker)	Mirizzi	Francesco
COGECA (notetaker)	BENITES	Cynthia
COPA	Woods	Angus
COPA	BOUDOIN	Michèle
COPA	DENNEHY	SEAN

COPA	GAEBEL	Christian
COPA	FINDLAY	Richard
COPA	BRUNEAU	Etienne
COPA	Jas	Stanislav
COPA	CASACA	Joao
ECVC	Roqueirol	Christian Antoine Eugène
ECVC	REZZIN	Marzia
EEB	KIKOU	Olga
EEB	VONESCH	Anne
EUROCOMMERCE	Heidebrecht	Merlin
FESASS	Lückhoff	Jürgen
FoodDrinkEurope	Pons Argimon	Ignacio
FoodDrinkEurope	Heck	Thomas
FoodDrinkEurope	SENCHEMÉS	DAVID
FoodDrinkEurope	RIMOLDI	giorgio
FoodDrinkEurope	Sturbaut	Koen
FoodDrinkEurope	TOMEI	François
FoodDrinkEurope	Quaglia	Giancarlo